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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

PART III. EUROPE

Section 13 - Spain

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.94-2841

III.13 SPAIN

Country Overview

Characteristics of the refugee population

1. Official government figures indicate that, during 1993, 12,615 persons applied for asylum, an increase of nearly 8 per cent over the previous year. The main countries of origin were Peru (1,530), Bosnia and Herzegovina (710), Cuba (423), Angola (224) and Iraq (210). A total of 59 per cent of the asylum applicants were men, 8 per cent were under 18 (70 per cent were between the ages of 18 and 35, 20 per cent between 35 and 50, and 2 per cent were between 50 and 65 years of age). In the first quarter of 1994, 2,927 persons applied for asylum.

2. Refugee status was granted to 1,287 persons in 1993, and 43 persons, mainly of Bosnian and Liberian origin, were allowed to remain under a temporary protection scheme. In the first three months of 1994, 81 persons were recognized as refugees and 15 granted temporary protection.

3. By the end of 1993 some 3,500 cases were awaiting decisions on their applications for refugee status.

4. While Spain has not established a formal resettlement quota, 579 refugees were accepted for resettlement in 1993. These were mostly Iraqis in need of protection in countries of first asylum in the Middle East, as well as Bosnian ex-detainees and family members.

Major developments

5. In 1993, Spain played an active role with the European institutions, especially in its efforts to harmonize asylum policies. In this connection, the Spanish Government created, within the Ministry of Interior, a special department dealing with questions relating to aliens and refugees (Dirección General de Extranjería y Asilo). This new department participates in ongoing discussions on the harmonization of asylum policies within the framework of the European Union. Spain is in the process of revising its refugee legislation with a view to bringing it in line with other European developments. The amended draft law 5/84 foresees, inter alia, the introduction of an accelerated admission procedure at border crossing-points, as well as UNHCR involvement in the eligibility procedure. The changes are expected to enter into force in the second half of 1994.

6. Pursuant to the Government's request, Spain became the 47th member of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme.

Programme objectives and priorities

7. At a policy level, UNHCR aims to ensure the further development of adequate refugee policies. UNHCR will continue in 1994 and 1995 to promote a fair implementation of the procedure and a liberal application of refugee criteria. Support will be provided to the appropriate fora for partnership-building between

the Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In this connection, refugee law training activities will be strengthened with national and regional government officials and NGOs involved in the new asylum procedure, as well as lawyers, the border police and academic institutions.

8. UNHCR will continue to expand its public information activities. In this context, a cooperation agreement was finalized with the Spanish Ministry of Social Affairs (INSERSO) in support of UNHCR's public information and promotion activities. These activities include the production of 20,000 copies of the Spanish version of the "Refugees" magazine and its distribution in Spanish speaking countries, as well as the publication in Spanish of a second edition of UNHCR's biennial report, The State of the World's Refugees. The Branch Office furthermore plans to intensify its ongoing awareness campaign through the production and distribution of posters, leaflets and educational material. A special exhibition on refugee problems in Africa will be organized in several Spanish cities.

9. The Branch Office will further strengthen its fund raising activities in the private sector in coordination with a new national association (Asociación España con ACNUR), which was created under UNHCR's auspices and whose operational and administrative costs are fully funded by the Office. The Association will conduct a letter campaign in order to collect donations from the public at large on behalf of UNHCR. At the same time, this association will attempt to raise public awareness of refugee issues, by establishig local support groups.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

10. Refugees and asylum-seekers obtain social and legal counselling through the International Rescue Committee (IRC). The Comision Espanola de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR) provides counselling and orientation to newly arrived asylum-seekers in need of legal advice. CEAR continues to collaborate with national NGOs and a widening network of contact lawyers in the regions of Madrid, Barcelona, the Canary Islands, Bilbao, Sevilla and Valencia. Local NGOs provide support for a centre for unaccompanied refugee minors in Madrid.

11. Funds were also provided to establish and provide operational support for Asociación España con ACNUR. The Spanish Government, through the Ministry of Social Affairs, provides funds to the Spanish Red Cross, the Catholic Commission and other NGOs to cover the costs of material assistance (housing, care and maintenance, and local integration).

12. The Government also covers the cost of legal counselling provided by CEAR. These activities are supplemented by UNHCR, which funds two lawyers under the local settlement project.

General Programmes

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

13. UNHCR activities were carried out in accordance with plans. No major changes were reported.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

14. In order to enable UNHCR to perform its duties within the framework of the amended asylum law, the Spanish Government, through the Ministry of Social Affairs (INSERSO), will provide support to finance some of the administrative costs, while UNHCR will finance other outstanding requirements.

15. Protection training activities are currently undertaken under two projects, one financed by UNHCR and the other by INSERSO, a particularly important exercise in the light of the introduction of a new asylum procedure.

16. All matters related to the promotion of UNHCR activities in Spain, such as public information and fund-raising, are carried out by the Asociación España con ACNUR, formally established in November 1993. The IRC continues to provide social and legal counselling to new arrivals.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

Local settlement

17. It is expected that, in 1995, the amendment to the asylum legislation, which is likely to involve the introduction of an accelerated admission procedure with UNHCR involvement, will be fully implemented. This will result in increased funding requirements at the initial stages, which are, however, expected to diminish as the Spanish Government gradually takes responsibility for the whole. In 1995, 50 per cent of the lawyers, both at the first stage of the process and on the Appeals Board will be financed by UNHCR, while the Government will cover the remainder.

18. Under its local settlement project, UNHCR plans to fund social and legal counselling activities for some 4,800 refugees and 15,000 asylum-seekers, implemented by the IRC.

19. It is expected that Asociación España con ACNUR will be able to cover its own operational and administrative expenses by the end of 1995. Until then, UNHCR will continue to contribute to the financing of this association.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

20. Savings in staff costs were achieved mainly due to exchange rate gains incurred during the year and because the post of Associate Protection Officer remained vacant for two months. Office premises, including maintenance costs, are provided rent-free by the Government.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

21. The 1994 revised budget is similar to the initial estimate. The Spanish Government provides a generous contribution to administrative expenditure and also covers public information activities through the Ministerio de Asuntos sociales. The main components in the budget therefore consist of salaries and staff-related

costs for the four international and four local staff.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

22. Expenditure foreseen in 1995 includes a slightly higher travel budget to enable protection staff to cover all regions of Spain.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN SPAIN

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994		1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
7.6 a/	–	–	VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	–
321.9	338.9	133.8	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	176.2
–	–	608.1	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	487.6
329.5	338.9	741.9	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	663.8
384.6	498.9	67.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	190.7
714.1	837.8	808.9	TOTAL (1)	854.5
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
–	–	30.0	OTHER TRUST FUNDS	–
275.2	–	–	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	–
275.2	0.0	30.0	TOTAL (2)	0.0
989.3	837.8	838.9	GRAND TOTAL (1+2)	854.5

a/ obligation incurred against overall allocation